

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-25. **(Canceled)**

26. **(Previously Presented)** A method for drilling a well in a coal seam, comprising:  
pumping a drilling fluid comprising a liquid down a drill string to a bit drilling a substantially horizontal well bore in a coal seam;  
pumping the drilling fluid down the drill string during drilling a plurality of lateral well bores in the coal seam off of the substantially horizontal well bore; and  
reducing downhole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by reducing a weight of drilling fluid in the well bore.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by lightening the hydrostatic pressure of the drilling fluid.

28. **(Canceled)**

29. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by aerating the drilling fluid.

30. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by circulating compressed air and mixing the air with the drilling fluid.

31. **(Canceled)**

32. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure to nearly zero.

33. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure below over balanced conditions.

34. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure to approximately 150-200 pounds per square inch.

35. **(Previously Presented)** A method of forming a well in a coal seam, comprising:  
drilling a well including a horizontal bore and a horizontal drainage pattern extending from the horizontal bore in a coal seam using a drilling fluid comprising liquid; and  
reducing the down-hole pressure sufficiently that drilling conditions are not over balanced for drilling of the horizontal bore by reducing a weight of drilling fluid in the well.

36. **(Canceled)**

37. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim ~~36~~35, further comprising reducing the down-hole pressure sufficiently that drilling conditions are under balanced for drilling of the horizontal drainage pattern.

38. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 35, wherein the coal seam is porous and fractured.

39. **(Previously Presented)** A method for producing gas from a coal seam, comprising:

drilling, using a drilling fluid comprising liquid with drilling conditions that are not over balanced, a horizontal drainage pattern extending from a horizontal well bore in a coal seam; and producing gas collected by the horizontal well bore to the surface.

40. **(Previously Presented)** A method for accessing a coal seam from the surface, comprising:  
drilling a well bore in a coal seam; and  
during drilling, pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface;  
wherein drilling the well bore comprises drilling a main horizontal bore and a plurality of lateral bores extending from the main horizontal bore.
41. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40, whereby hydrostatic pressure on the subterranean zone is reduced during drilling
42. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40, wherein the well bore comprises a first well bore, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface through a second well bore.
43. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 42, wherein the second well bore comprises a substantially vertical well bore.
44. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 42, wherein the first well bore comprises an articulated well bore.
45. **(Canceled)**
46. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40, wherein the coal seam comprises a pressure below 150 pounds per square inch (psi).
47. **(Canceled)**

48. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface using a downhole pump.

49. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface using gas lift.

50. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40, whereby drilling is accomplished without loss of drilling fluids into the subterranean zone and plugging the subterranean zone.

51. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 42, the first and second well bores intersecting one another at a junction, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from proximate to the junction of the first and second well bores to the surface.

52. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 51, wherein the junction comprises a cavity.

53. **(Previously Presented)** A method for underbalanced drilling of a coal seam, comprising:

drilling a substantially horizontal well bore in the coal seam;

during drilling of the substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation, pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid and cuttings from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface;

drilling a plurality of lateral well bores extending from the substantially horizontal well bore; and

during drilling of the plurality of lateral well bores, pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid and cuttings from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface.

54. **(Previously Presented)** A method for accessing a subterranean coal formation from the surface, comprising:

drilling a substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation;

during drilling of the substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation, reducing the weight of drilling fluids, the drilling fluids comprising liquid;

drilling a plurality of lateral well bores from the substantially horizontal well bore; and

during drilling of the plurality of lateral well bores, lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by drilling fluids on the coal formation.

55. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 54, further comprising lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by the drilling fluids by pumping the drilling fluids from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface.

56. **(Canceled)**

57. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 55, further comprising pumping the drilling fluids using gas lift.

58. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 55, further comprising pumping drilling fluids from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface through a second well bore intercepting the substantially horizontal well bore.

59. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 29 wherein pumping a drilling fluid comprising a liquid down a drill string comprises pumping a drilling mud down the drill string.



60. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 35 wherein drilling a well including a horizontal bore in a coal seam using a drilling fluid comprising liquid comprises using a drilling mud.

61. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 40 wherein pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid comprises pumping drilling mud.

62. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 54 wherein lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by drilling fluids comprises lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by drilling mud.

63. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 53, whereby hydrostatic pressure on the subterranean zone is reduced during drilling.

64. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 53, wherein the well bore comprises a first well bore, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the first well bore to the surface through a second well bore.

65. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 64, wherein the second well bore comprises a substantially vertical well bore.

66. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 64, wherein the first well bore comprises an articulated well bore.

67. **(Canceled)**

68. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 53, wherein the coal seam comprises a pressure below 150 pounds per square inch (psi).

69. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 53, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface using a downhole pump.

70. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 53, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface using gas lift.

71. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 53, whereby drilling is accomplished without plugging the coal seam.

72. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 64, the first and second well bores intersecting one another at a junction, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from proximate to the junction of the first and second well bores to the surface.

73. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 72, wherein the junction comprises a cavity.

74. **(Canceled)**

75. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising drilling the substantially horizontal well bore through a well bore having a radiused portion.

76. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 26, wherein the drilling fluid comprises foam.

77. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim ~~74~~26, further comprising drilling the substantially horizontal well bore through a well bore having a radiused portion.

78. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 35, wherein drilling the horizontal drainage pattern comprises drilling a plurality of lateral well bores in the coal seam off the horizontal well bore.

79. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 35, further comprising drilling the substantially horizontal bore through a bore having a radiused portion.

80. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 35, wherein the drilling fluid comprises foam.

81. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 78, further comprising drilling a substantially horizontal bore through a bore having a radiused portion.

82. **(Canceled)**

83. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 54, further comprising drilling the substantially horizontal well bore through a well bore having a radiused portion.

84. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 54, wherein the drilling fluid comprises foam.

85. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim ~~82~~54, further comprising drilling the substantially horizontal well bore through a well bore having a radiused portion.

86. **(Previously Presented)** A method for accessing a subterranean coal formation from the surface, comprising:

drilling through a well bore having a radiused portion a substantially horizontal well bore in a coal formation;

drilling through the well bore having a radiused portion and the substantially horizontal well bore a plurality of lateral well bores in the coal formation; and

during drilling of the substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation and the plurality of lateral well bores, using a drilling fluid comprising foam.

87. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 86, wherein drilling conditions are not overbalanced during drilling of the horizontal well bore and the plurality of lateral well bores.

88. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 86, further comprising producing gas and water collected by the substantially horizontal well bore and the plurality of lateral well bores to the surface.

89. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 86, further comprising:  
conducting water and gas from the coal formation to a well bore junction, the well bore junction coupled to a fluid collection area at least partially disposed below the substantially horizontal well bore;

collecting water in the fluid collection area from the substantially horizontal well bore and the plurality of lateral well bores for production to the surface;

pumping water from the fluid collection area to the surface; and

producing gas to the surface.

90. **(Previously Presented)** A method for drilling a well in a coal seam, comprising:  
drilling a substantially horizontal bore in a coal seam using a drilling fluid;  
drilling through the substantially horizontal well bore a plurality of lateral well bores in  
the coal formation; and  
lifting drilling fluid to the surface using a pump system having an inlet downhole.

91. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 90, wherein the inlet of the pump is  
proximate to the coal seam.

92. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 91, wherein the inlet of the pump is  
in the coal seam.